



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,  
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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How few of mortal men are they who see the night-flying insects for whom the night flowers open and send forth their notes of invitation, written not on scented paper, but made up of pure scent, scent that appeals not to all insects indiscriminately, but to those few species only that are capable of helping the flower in its complicated mechanism which results in propagation by seed. Of their capacity to render this service, of their actual rendering of it, they have probably no knowledge, no consciousness at all, yet they understand the message of the flower, and are eager to accept the inducement offered for their services. The day-flying insects one can watch on one's garden flowers with ease and pleasure, noting those which the honey bees choose to frequent, neglecting all others for their sakes, as well as the favourites of the great velvety bumbles, the desired of the wasps, the certain flowers to which return again and again certain butterflies; but the night haunting ones are more difficult, one may long to see them and fail to do so, yet the few good observers do sometimes note them and their ways and tell thereof. The honeysuckle with its long flower-tube needs the Hawk-moth for its fertilization, and the scented message sent forth to bring this special agent has been tested by Professor Kerner, of Vienna; his tale is best told in his own words:—"In summer, when twilight falls, a plant of Honeysuckle in the Botanic Gardens is regularly visited by the Convolvulus Hawk-moth (*Sphinx Convolvuli*). These hawk-moths are accustomed, after they have sucked the honey, and when the twilight fades into night, to settle near the plant, on the bark of old tree trunks, or on fallen leaves, and there remain with folded wings as if they were benumbed until the next evening. A few summers ago I very carefully picked up one of the pieces of wood which had been chosen as a resting place by one of these hawk-moths. I marked the moth lightly with cinnabar and brought it, together with the piece of wood on which it remained immovable, to another part of the gardens, three hundred yards away from the honeysuckle. When twilight

fell, the hawk-moth began to wave its feelers, which serve it as olfactory nerves, hither and thither a few times, then stretched its wings and flew like an arrow through the garden towards the honeysuckle. Shortly after I met the hawk-moth with the cinnabar mark hovering over these flowers and sucking the honey. It had flown straight to the plant and must have been able to smell the scent of the flowers even at so great a distance." The scent which is a message is not wasted in the daytime, it leaves the flowers only at the hours when the insects are in a state to receive it, and it travels far; many of the honeysuckles, petunias, the wild orchid, *Habenaria bifolia*, give off abundant odour from six or seven in the evening till midnight, and have no scent at all or a very faint one only through the day. The flowers of the Virginian creeper, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia*, are small and green, hidden away by the foliage, yet the bees find them, and are drawn to them from all sides; the allurement must be scent, though it is not perceptible to our larger organs.

The beauty of white flowers is never adequately seen by day; darkness, or rather semi-darkness, seems to add to their cold brilliance in a strange manner. They come out and dominate the garden, all the red flowers and the blues and the purples are gone—obliterated; only the pale yellows half reveal themselves as ghosts beside the clear-edged whites. The white foxgloves are supreme in their time, an earlier one; and their seedlings should be moved in autumn into the background, that groups of them may do well under the partial shade of large trees. One soon learns the difference of the two sorts, red and white ones, even in the seedlings; the white ones have no red or purple about their leaf bases and leaf stalks, they are all green and a whitish-green easily recognised when once observed. Where there are grey rocks for a background, the purple foxgloves look well, but in the midst of green the white may be preferable. One cannot have both purple and white in the same garden, for the bees mix them up so, visiting purple and white indiscriminately so that the seedlings all come purple; but one can eliminate the undesired sort by taking it up as it reveals itself.

The plants that sow themselves in the garden deserve to be enjoyed more than all others. I don't mean the weeds,



and as such I designate all that enter the garden of their own volition and not of mine, but when I have introduced a plant, sown an annual, or bought a biennial, I am grateful if it makes itself at home and reappears another year. There is a white-bracted Eryngium that I purchased, unknowing that it was but annual or biennial, and mourned over its death, but in later years I have had half a dozen masses of its graceful forms flowering in July and August. By happy chance the first seedlings were not uprooted, they were so very like in their first leaves the Marsh Marigolds that had they not been in an out-of-the-way spot and so given the benefit of a slight doubt they would have been cast away. All these annuals and biennials self-sown are autumn sown, they survive the winter as young plants and increase in strength. *Limnanthes Douglasi* does this in the crevices of the rock garden, coming year after year with a great profusion of flowers. The self-sown of the perennials are not so desirable because one may soon have too many of any one thing. The seeds of the day lilies, of some of the irises, of the summer snowflake, of *Alstrœmeria*, had better not be allowed to shed themselves when once one has enough of them. The great Mullein seeds itself, but though it is a wild plant, I first brought it into the garden, and it is kind enough to reproduce itself just as much as I want of it and no more.

S. ARMITT.

## SENIOR ART CLUB.

This Club is open to any readers of the *Review*, either lady or gentleman. The terms are 6s. for six months. All work marked for exhibition is criticised by Mr. David Murray, A.R.A., on the yearly "Pupils' Show Day," in Miss Stewart Wood's studio, Vine Court Studio, Holland Street, Kensington. All particulars of the Club can be obtained from Miss A. Y. Davidson, Secretary, 41, Bessborough Gardens, London, S.W.

MAY TO NOVEMBER, 1901.

*Subjects for October.*

I.—*Brown and Gold.* This leaves a wide range for the imagination, and I recommend the more advanced students to choose subjects to please themselves.

II.—*A Study in Red and Green.* The very natural suggestion given by this title is a study of apples with their leaves, or a mass of them fallen on the grass. It is a subject often given, but one that presents endless variety of beauty.

## OUR WORK.

*Parents' Review School.*—In Classes II. and III. French History should be omitted this Term.

*The Children's Quarterly* is issued by the Reading Branch Natural History Club, price 2s. 2d., post free for the year, or 6½d. per copy. It should be ordered from Mrs. Stanley Hayward, Hazelwood, Kendrick Road, Reading. There is also a Quarterly Portfolio of paintings, particulars of which can be obtained from Mrs. Hart-Davis, Dunsden Vicarage, Reading. The Botanical Portfolio is managed by Dr. Stansfield, 120, Oxford Road, Reading. Instructions as to quarterly subjects of study for these portfolios are printed in *The Children's Quarterly*.

## BOOKS.

*Studies of Lakeland Birds*, by Mary L. Armitt (G. Middleton, Ambleside, 1/-). Another bird book from Miss M. L. Armitt is a possession to rejoice in. Readers of the *Parents' Review* have already had to thank the author for the opportunity of sharing her peculiarly tender intimacy with various of the feathered peoples. Lakeland birds are birds of almost anywhere in Britain—the Whinchat, the Titmice, the Tree-Creeper, the Garden Warbler, the Pied Wagtail, and the rest, are friends available and delightful almost anywhere. What we want is an introduction from someone who is already an intimate of theirs, and such an introduction Miss M. L. Armitt gives